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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/965,152	09/27/2001	Dwip N. Banerjee	AUS920010569US1	6237
35525	7590	09/05/2007		
IBM CORP (YA) C/O YEE & ASSOCIATES PC P.O. BOX 802333 DALLAS, TX 75380			EXAMINER LASTRA, DANIEL	
			ART UNIT 3622	PAPER NUMBER
			MAIL DATE 09/05/2007	DELIVERY MODE PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/965,152	Applicant(s) BANERJEE ET AL.	
	Examiner DANIEL LASTRA	Art Unit 3622	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 15 June 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,12,23 and 34-36 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,12,23 and 34-36 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 1, 12, 23 and 34-36 have been examined. Application 09/965,152 (SERVICE DISCOVERY IN A NETWORK OF AUTOMATIC PRODUCT/SERVICE DISPENSING MACHINES) has a filing date 09/27/2001.

Response to Amendment

2. In response to Final Rejection filed 04/06/2007, the Applicant filed an RCE on 06/15/2007, which amended claims 1, 12, 23, added new claims 34-36 and cancel claims 2-4, 13-15, 24-26.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1, 12, 23 and 34-36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Moore (US 7,084,737) in view of Walker (7,249,050) and Powell (US 5,956,694).

As per claims 1, 12 and 23, Moore teaches:

A method for providing products, the method comprising:

receiving, at a first automatic product/service dispensing machine at a location in a micronetwork of proximally located diverse automatic product/service dispensing machines, a request for an item *by a user* (see col 5, lines 1-30)

receiving at the first automatic product/service dispensing machine, a payment device of the user wherein the payment device includes identity information (see col 5, lines 1-5);

responsive to a determination that the item is unavailable at the first automatic product/service dispensing machine, providing the user with redirection information regarding a location of at least one alternative automatic product/service dispensing machine in the micronetwork at which the item may be obtained (see col 5, lines 1-30; col 7, lines 20-40).

Moore fails to teach:

requesting the user to select a second automatic product/service dispensing machine among the at least one alternative automatic product/service dispensing machine; responsive to the user selecting the second automatic product/service dispensing machine, providing the identity information to the second automatic product/service dispensing machine; and responsive to receiving the payment device of the user at the second automatic product/service dispensing machine, the second automatic product/service dispensing machine dispensing the item and deducting an amount from the price of the item, wherein the user is charged a reduced price for the item at the second automatic product/service dispensing machine. However, Walker teaches vending machines that provide customers with electronic coupons offers of alternative products of said vending machines where said offers are redeemable at a future date and where said offers are written to a magnetic-strip card (see Walker col 15, lines 60-67). Powell teaches redeeming electronic coupons using customers' cards

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(see Powell abstract; col 6, lines 1-45). Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the application was made, to know that Moore would be motivated to allow a customer that selects an unavailable item in a first vending machine to store in a Powell's customer card a electronic coupon discount, as taught by Walker in order to compensate said customer for the distress of selecting an unavailable items in said first vending machine when said customer presents said card to an alternate vending machine which carries said unavailable product of said first vending machine.

As per claims 34-36, Moore teaches:

The method of claim 1, wherein the payment device comprises one of a smart card, credit card, charge card and debit card (see col 5, lines 1-5).

Response to Arguments

4. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1, 12, 23 and 34-36 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to DANIEL LASTRA whose telephone number is 571-272-6720 and fax 571-273-6720. The examiner can normally be reached on 9:30-6:00.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, ERIC W. STAMBER can be reached on 571-272-6724. The official Fax number is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

DL

Daniel Lastra
August 30, 2007

Yehdega Rotta